



The Antigua and Barbuda High Commission

Official Newsletter - Issue 138 -- January/February 2010

AID FOR HAITI - HORNSEY MORAVIAN CHURCH

Sunday 31st January was an exciting day at the Hornsey Moravian Church. Following a week of intense preparation by the choir under the direction of Choir Conductor Dr Carl Roberts, the choir pulled off a very successful programme captioned "An Evening of Music and Singing" in aid of Haiti.

The programme featured not only the Hornsey Moravian Church choir, but the Alliouagana Singers,

The Hughes Brothers Steel band and other musicians. The choir was accompanied on the keyboard and organ by Brother Orville Braithwaite, who along with his wife also performed a soulful musical duet.



Picture above (left to right) HE Dr Carl Roberts, HE Mr James R Wright and his wife (centre) - Canada and HE Mr Eldridge Stephens - St Lucia



(Above) HE Dr Carl Roberts conducting the choir

Intercessions and readings of scripture

were done by the pastor of the church Rev. Joachim Krausel and High Commissioners from Canada and St Lucia.(shown here in the picture above).

The combined efforts of all participants and guests allowed the Hornsey Moravian Church to make a donation of £2000 to

the Haiti Relief Fund through Christian Aid.

Among the invited dignitaries were the Acting High Commissioners for Trinidad and Tobago and the Commonwealth of Dominica, the High Commissioner of Barbados and the Ambassador for Costa Rica and her family.

Dear Readers, you will notice that we have inserted a newsletter put out by The Friends of the Fiennes Institute. Please note on the cover page of that newsletter - Mrs Irene Carlos-- is a resident of the Fiennes and the oldest living person on the island. She celebrated her 108th birthday on 23 January 2010. She was visited by the Governor-General and Prime Minister and other Notables on the day.

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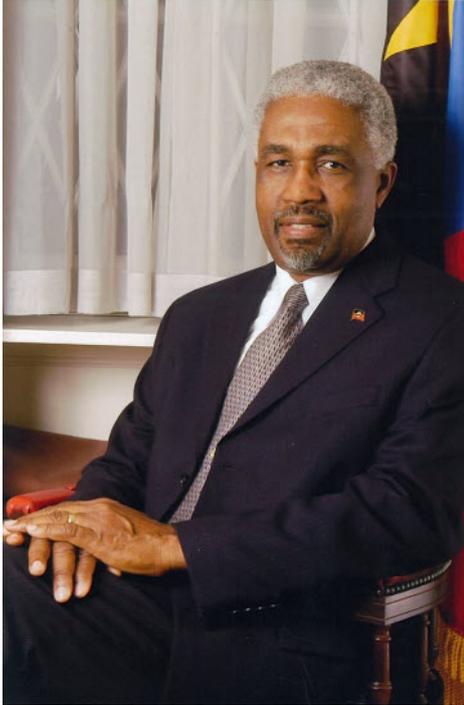
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HIGH COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE



Comparisons and Inferences

By
H.E. Dr. Carl B Roberts
High Commissioner

Many times in life we make comparisons about different subjects, about ourselves or about other people. At other times, we make inferences based on these comparisons and use both of the above activities to guide our actions or to influence the decisions of other persons with whom we are attempting to interact.

The Wikipedia Website provides some information on this phenomenon. It states that "comparisons are useful to convey information about different topics, to show what makes each topic unique in its own right while showing the inherent similarities".

Once the comparisons are made we tend to make various inferences from the analysis of the data associated with each subject being compared. Making an inference is therefore "the process of drawing a conclusion by applying the clues (of logic, statistics, etc.) to observations or hypotheses, or by interpolating the next step in an intuited pattern" [Wikipedia Website].

Where am I going with this you may ask? Let me begin by citing the following. Recently while I was watching television, I overheard the mother of a five-year old boy expressing what to her mind was a comfort statement. She stated that while her son had not yet started to speak at 16 months, she was not particularly worried as *she was aware of her friend's child who had taken nearly 18 months to speak.*

Two things quite often form the topic of discussion between young parents. These relate to the times when their children in early life began to speak or to walk. Later in life the discussion may turn to how children are progressing compared to their peers in school.

It is generally accepted that not all babies develop at the same pace. Even babies within the same family may talk or walk at different stages in their lives. Likewise the performance of children and how their academic competencies compare to their peers provide an interesting opportunity for comparisons and inferences. I saw this only too well in the development of my two sons.

The question that comes up ever so often is when should we be concerned. If the comparisons and inferences

drawn from early stage of development worry us when should that worry lead us to take action?

Let me now connect the third thread of my topic. Several days after seeing the TV programme, I was listening to a local radio station in my homeland of Antigua and Barbuda. One caller reminded the listeners that in less than two weeks' time the government of Antigua and Barbuda would be celebrating the 1st anniversary of its 2nd victory at the polls. Somehow the discussion that followed drifted to the state of the economy and the failure of the governing party to deliver on promises made during the last campaign. Twelve months and the government is still floundering was the opinion expressed.

A former minister in an earlier interview compared the performance of the economy under the present government with the performance when his party held the reins of power between 1999 and 2004. Naturally the inferences and comparisons pointed in one and only one direction. Things *would* have been better under the governance of his party. Is the comparison fair and are the inferences grounded on some facts which are easily verified? Are the externalities similar such that comparative analysis could lead to unbiased inferences?

In the situation cited on the early part of this message, there is so much in the family environment that can influence the development of the child. Even though each child is unique, their reaction to these factors demonstrates clearly this uniqueness and the results substantiate the individuality of the child's character. Parents can do quite a lot to help build the character of the young infant and

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GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Office of the Prime Minister
January 13, 2010

CABINET STATEMENT

On the Devastation Caused in Haiti by an Earthquake and the Passing of Former Antigua and Leeward Islands Cricketer Hayden Walsh

Cabinet at its weekly session on Wednesday 13th January 2010 noted with sadness the loss of life and devastation caused by a massive earthquake in the Caribbean island of Haiti.

Chairman of Cabinet, Prime Minister Dr. the Hon. W. Baldwin Spencer said that his government is deeply concerned over the enormous devastation and the massive loss of life caused by the earthquake to a fellow Member State of the Caribbean Community.

Cabinet agreed that it will immediately support the relief and rescue efforts being organized by CARICOM to include supporting and providing manpower to the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) and the Regional Security System (RSS).

"Cabinet expresses the solidarity of the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda with the people of Haiti in this challenging time and calls upon the people of Antigua and Barbuda to pray for the people and government of Haiti."

"Cabinet also agreed to pledge EC\$100,000 to the account

established by the Antigua and Barbuda Red Cross as part of its efforts to provide support to the people of Haiti.

Citizens and residents of Antigua and Barbuda are encouraged to make donations to the account established by the Antigua and Barbuda Red Cross."

In addition, the Cabinet is committed, through CARICOM, to work with the Government of Haiti in effecting the long term reconstruction of all aspects of social and economic life and the restoration of the administrative and institutional systems necessary for a full return to normal life.

"Cabinet also agreed that the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force and the Antigua and Barbuda Search and Rescue Unit should be on stand-by to assist in the work of CDEMA and the RSS, should the request be made. In addition a list of relief items stock piled in Antigua as part of the regional warehouse has been forwarded to CDEMA to aid in the organization of relief and recovery efforts in Haiti."

Cabinet also noted with sadness the passing of former Antigua and Barbuda and Leeward Islands



**Dr The Honourable W. Baldwin Spencer
Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda**

opening batsman, cricket administrator and coach Hayden "Sharlo" Walsh.

"Hayden "Sharlo" Walsh was a true son of the Caribbean and a lover of the game of cricket which unites us all. His love for the game, outside of his professional career, was evident as he dedicated a large portion of his time and energies in developing the skills of our young boys and girls."

"Cricket and Antigua and Barbuda has lost a great son and a stalwart of the game."

Cabinet expressed its condolences to Hayden's children and other members of the Walsh family. May his soul rest in eternal peace.

ANTIGUA SAILING

WEEK • 24th - 30th

APRIL 2010

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA SIGNS TIEA WITH GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

His Excellency, Dr. Carl B. Roberts, the High Commissioner for Antigua and Barbuda, signed a Tax Information Exchange Agreement (TIEA) on behalf of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda with Great Britain and Northern Ireland on 18 January 2010. Signing on behalf of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was the Rt. Honourable Stephen Timms MP, Financial Secretary to the Treasury.

Antigua and Barbuda's High Commissioner in the UK has now signed a total of three Tax Information Exchange Agreements on behalf of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.

Other countries in the Caribbean Community, namely St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, which were represented by their High Commissioners, also signed the Agreement.

The purpose of the [Agreement](#) is to promote international cooperation in tax matters through the exchange of



L-R His Excellency, Dr. Carl B. Roberts, High Commissioner for Antigua and Barbuda and the Rt. Honourable Stephen Timms MP, Financial Secretary to the Treasury

information. It was developed by the OECD Global Forum Working Group on Effective Exchange of Information.

The Working Group consisted of representatives from OECD Member countries as well as delegates from

Aruba, Bermuda, Bahrain, Cayman Islands, Cyprus, Isle of Man, Malta, Mauritius, the Netherlands Antilles, the Seychelles and San Marino.

UK Sunday Times include 16 page feature on Antigua and Barbuda in its 2010 Valentine's issue

Leading UK Newspaper, The Sunday Times featured Antigua and Barbuda in its 2010 Valentine's issue, which was distributed throughout the UK, on Sunday 14.

The full colour, glossy insert commissioned by The Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority, was filled with inspiring and aspirational images of the destination and its hotel properties. Readers were invited to 'Dream a Little Dream' by browsing the inserted 16 pages.

Director of Tourism for the UK Market Hilary Modeste said: "The first quarter is the key booking period for the UK consumer. The Antigua and Barbuda

UK office is therefore launching our 2010 consumer awareness campaign with the Sunday Times February 14 issue, which will reach approximately 1.5 million potential visitors."

The design which focused more on amazing imagery, rather than extensive text, was meant to encourage potential visitors from the family, weddings and honeymoon markets, to travel to the destination.

The insert, showcased the wide range of the country's accommodation product that ranges from the ultra-exclusive luxury properties to the smaller more intimate VIP properties.

11 local properties have advertised in the issue, with each property offering the reader exclusive offers.

The properties, Sandals Grande Antigua Resort and Spa, Grand

Pineapple Beach Antigua, Jolly Beach Resort and Spa, Blue Waters and Sugar Ridge participated in the promotion, along with the smaller, intimate properties such as The Catamaran Hotel, Siboney Beach Club, The Inn at English Harbor, Copper & Lumber Store Hotel, Long Bay Hotel, and Buccaneer Beach Club.

CEO of the Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority, Colin C. James, said "the campaign would be of tremendous value to a wide range of properties on island, and for the first time includes several of the smaller hotels.

The ability to involve some of the smaller properties in this promotion, and provide them with maximum exposure, was an extra plus." He added that: "the images and offers in the 16 page feature, appearing at this

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COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT INTRODUCE NEW SYSTEM FOR FINANCING SECRETARIAT PROVIDING FINANCIAL RELIEF FOR SOME MEMBER COUNTRIES

At the recent Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) held from 27 to 29 November, 2009 in Trinidad and Tobago, member states agreed on a new system for financing the Commonwealth Secretariat.

The scale of contributions, which sets the contribution to be made by each member state to fund the Secretariat, was last changed more than twenty years ago. The revised system will mean that the contributions of a number of countries will increase, while financial relief will be given to those with the least capacity to pay, resulting in savings of between 37% and 65%. Nine members will increase their contributions by 25% or more and one of these will see its contribution double.

Prior to the new agreement, all member countries contributed to the Commonwealth Secretariat according to a scale agreed back in 1989. In the two decades that followed, members' relative capacity to pay had changed significantly: some Commonwealth countries had experienced strong economic growth, whilst others had not.

Under the new agreement, which will be phased in over a three-year period, beginning in the current financial year, the starting point for determining each country's contribution is its relative capacity to pay. However, the new scale also has a number of elements, including a revised ceiling and floor to reflect the other principles mandated by Heads of Government at the Kampala CHOGM in 2007: equitable



**Secretary-General Kamalesh Sharma
Marlborough House, London, UK**

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Roland Kemp/Commonwealth Secretariat

burden sharing and shared ownership for the Secretariat.

In future the scale will be reviewed every five years and assessed to take into account member countries changing economic status.

In welcoming the agreement Commonwealth Secretary-General, Kamalesh Sharma, paid particular tribute to the work of the Chair of the Working Group of Members that developed the agreement, the High Commissioner of Antigua and

Barbuda to the United Kingdom, His Excellency Dr. Carl Roberts.

Mr Sharma said: "The Secretariat owes a huge debt of gratitude to Dr. Roberts. His leadership, dedication and skill – coupled with strong support from the Secretariat – was instrumental in bringing about an agreement. In addition to all the work he put into the Working Group itself, and into numerous bilateral meetings behind the scenes to develop the agreement, the role he played at CHOGM in skilfully navigating the proposal through the Foreign Ministers' Meeting to the meeting of Heads of Government, was absolutely critical."

Mr Sharma also noted that the willingness of the major contributors to pay more was a sign of the confidence which member countries have in the continuing relevance and importance of the Commonwealth.

Steve Cutts, who as Director of the Secretariat's Strategic Planning and Evaluation Division provided technical support to the Working Party, noted that while the agreement does not increase the size of the Secretariat's budget overall, there was reason to hope that some additional resources would flow into the organisation as a result. He explained that several countries, who will now be paying a lower rate under the new agreement, had indicated that they would pass on their savings to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation or the Commonwealth Youth Fund.

March 26 to 28
Antigua and Barbuda
Culinary Festival

Rappaport Passes

His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts, High Commissioner for Antigua and Barbuda represented the government of Antigua and Barbuda at the memorial service held in Geneva, Switzerland for Bruce Rappaport, 86, a Swiss-based financier and international oil trader, who in 1981 acquired the majority holdings in Antigua's West Indies Oil Company on Friar's Hill Road.

Some considered him to be one of our foremost benefactors and he referred to himself as a 'Friend of Antigua'.

He will best be remembered by all Antiguan and Barbudans for procuring the Codrington papers for the people of Antigua and Barbuda, when he purchased them in 1980 off the auction block in England. He later constructed the National Archives to house the papers.

He was also Antigua and Barbuda's Ambassador to Russia.

Source: Antigua Observer



His Excellency Dr Carl Roberts and Mrs Ruth Rappaport at a reception at the Rappaport's residence following the funeral service and burial of the late Mr Bruce Rappaport.

Antigua and Barbuda contributes to UN Flash Appeal for women in Haiti

As part of the international community's response to the people of Haiti, Antigua and Barbuda has made two small but nevertheless significant donations to the United Nations Flash Appeal, specifically targeted to rapidly rebuilding and expanding women's shelters and provide services to women and their families left homeless by last month's massive earthquake that hit Haiti.

"We recognize that the limited resources we have can never go far

enough to address fully the magnitude of problems faced by our CARICOM neighbour, Haiti. However, through small, targeted responses such as this, I believe we can contribute to this effort, coordinated by UNIFEM, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, aimed at ensuring that emergency and early recovery assessment and assistance adequately address the different needs of women, men and children," said Prime Minister the Honourable W. Baldwin Spencer.

During the flash appeal launched by the United Nations last month in the wake of the massive earthquake that devastated the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince, UNIFEM notified UN member States that it was seeking to

raise approximately US \$2 million to implement shelter reconstruction and ensure that women participate actively in the recovery efforts to come. The initiative is aimed at, among other things, bringing shelter and protection to Haiti's women and their families and counter gender-based violence.

The outgoing President of Chile Michelle Bachelet has agreed to work closely with UNIFEM by lending her energies and presence to amplify Haitian women's voices and recovery needs. And the organization's staff in Haiti has gathered women's organizations and other partner agencies to re-establish connections and begin coordination to provide psychosocial activities and other services.

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time will also help to reposition the destination's image in a very positive way in the minds of the UK consumer."

Following from the Sunday Times Insert, The UK office continued to build momentum in the marketplace, with the launch of the new website, www.visitantiguabarbuda.co.uk. The website features attractive holiday offers provided by hotel partners.

The Sunday Times is considered an up-market National UK newspaper and has a circulation of close to 1,000,000.



**Prime Minister
Dr. the Hon. W. Baldwin Spencer
Remarks
Opening of Island Academy International New Campus
14th January 2010**

“Governor General, Dame Louise Lake-Tack;

Education Minister, Dr. the Hon. Jacqui Quinn-Leandro;

Other members of the Cabinet of Antigua and Barbuda;

Chairman of the Board of Governors of Island Academy International, Dr. Soumi SenGupta and members of the Board;

Director of Island Academy International, Jim Pastore and other members of the Administrative Department;

Teachers, students, support staff, parents, specially invited,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I bring warm greetings and congratulations from the Government of Antigua and Barbuda to the Board of Governors and Faculty and Staff of Island Academy International on this momentous occasion, which signals the expansion of this fine institution.

Today, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda is particularly pleased with the level of partnership we have able to nurture with Island Academy International. The results of our collaboration are positive proof that my government’s policy of developing Public-Private Partnerships are achievable.

Not only was the government interested in partnering with Island Academy International in the provision of lands for the construction of two additional buildings, but we recognize that the Board of Island Academy shares the government’s vision of providing the best possible education to our young people and therefore we were eager to assist.

Over the past nine years since the establishment of this institution, the Board of Governors and Faculty have been successful in achieving its main mission of empowering each student by providing a life experience that inspires the development of the whole child, which enables each student to embrace

the multiplicity of communities the world-over.

But more importantly, this institution has been a model in promoting a culture whereby each parent, child and teacher work together to achieve mutual respect and productive partnerships. The government believes that the full participation of the school and parents in the education of our children can produce untold benefits for our nation and make education work for our young people.

I wish also to congratulate Island

potential to radically advance the delivery of education in Antigua and Barbuda.

With a stated goal of encouraging students to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right and to develop young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect; this programme can only be beneficial to the Antigua and Barbuda society.



Island Academy students

Academy International on being recently accredited with the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) at the Diploma level.

This is a significant achievement not only for Island Academy International but also for Antigua and Barbuda, as this accreditation has made Antigua and Barbuda the first country within the OECS to have such a programme.

I wish to say to parents and members of the faculty of Island Academy International, not to take this IBO accreditation lightly. It is a very significant development that has the

I congratulate Island Academy International once again for this achievement and commend the Board of Governors, Faculty and Staff for partnering with the Government of Antigua and Barbuda in providing an education programme based on the holistic development of each child.

Congratulations, and I look forward to continue working with each one of you as we educate our young people.

Thank you very much.”



Susie's Hot Sauce exhibited in Germany

Mrs Rosemarie McMaster MBE was present at the CMT Fair 2010 which took place in Stuttgart, Germany Jan 16-24, where Susie's Hot Sauce was well presented and embraced by the German visitors...with a knock out...sold out record. Every last drop of Susie's was "Sold Out."

As usual, when she attends trade shows, she sells Antigua and Barbuda with a spicy passion, as she adds the fiery sentiments of Susie's Hot Sauce and encourage many patrons to visit our beautiful paradise island.

Dr. Giersch, Honorary Consul in Germany, re-emphasized how good Mrs McMaster is at promoting her country. "When I go out there...I work for results...which will and has benefited my country!", she says.

"The impact of the show was so good, that we had lots of promises to visit Antigua. and Barbuda .. and many interest for loads of Susie's to Germany. I will have to secure a reliable stock of peppers so as to fully utilize this great opportunity.



Mrs McMaster surrounded by hot sauce lovers

I must thank Dr. Giersch, and his very hard working, committed and devoted team for the great work they are doing to promote Antigua Barbuda, and very importantly, for having such confidence in Susie's, to extend the invitation to us to participate in this wonderful trade show. I have been to many trade shows all over the world....and I think this is the best and most professionally organized that I

have seen. I was given the opportunity to present our products to the Prime Minister and the Mayor of Stuttgart, respectively.

This exercise will make a great contribution to the expansion efforts and plans of Susie's. This year will definitely be a dramatic action year for us", Mrs McMaster said.

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alertness can point to early remedies that, with the help of medical professionals, can lead to appropriate corrective actions being taken.

In the case of economic performance of the State of Antigua and Barbuda, let us attempt to analyse the discussion on the management of the economy in 2009 vs. 2001.

There are many factors which can be used to analyse the performance of the economy of any country. One could look at the GDP per capita, the debt per capita, the debt ratio, the level of local savings per

capita among many others. Per capita figures are more often used to avoid skewing the comparisons and make it so much easier to compare countries of various sizes. When we look at the society in general we use mortality rate, women in politics, energy consumption per capita and other socio-economic indices.

The comparisons made during the interview did not, as it should in all fairness have done, take into account the state of the world economy then and now. It must indeed be pointed out that none of the crises in the world environment before 2004 (oil, financial or otherwise) affected world

economy as did the crisis of 2008/09. It must also be borne in mind that the expected length and spread of this current crisis is more severe and pervasive than any other since the 1930s.

What then must we say of the comparisons made and inferences drawn up? We can clearly and quite rightly conclude that the environmental factors are more detrimental now than at any time under the former government. As the discussion never cited any economic factors, it is difficult to conduct an analysis and comment on the fairness of the comparison. The possible blacklisting of Antigua and Barbuda by the OECD

**Finance and Economy
Minister Harold Lovell meets
Brazilian Ambassador**

Minister of Finance and the Economy the Hon. Harold Lovell met on Monday 8th February with the new ambassador from Brazil accredited to Antigua and Barbuda, H.E. Mr. Brian Michael Fraser Neele.

Ambassador Neele, who was formerly posted to Honduras, is establishing a new Brazilian Embassy in Antigua and Barbuda. The Brazilian embassy will be located in the Price Waterhouse Building on the Old Parham Road.

Mr. Lovell welcomed Ambassador Neele to Antigua and stated that he wished to work closely with him in strengthening the cooperation between Antigua and Barbuda and Brazil. Minister Lovell highlighted several areas where he felt that closer cooperation could have an impact on the Antiguan economy and society, including the establishment of air links; cultural exchanges; academic scholarships; and sport.

Ambassador Neele pointed out that he was very happy with his posting, and that he intended to work with the Antiguan authorities to bring practical results to the Brazilian presence in Antigua.

The minister and the ambassador also discussed the economic situation in the Caribbean and the need for concessionary financing opportunities to be expanded for countries such as Antigua and Barbuda. Ambassador Neil indicated that Brazil was opening four new embassies in the Caribbean region as part of Brazil's new diplomatic outreach. Brazil has had thousands of troops in Haiti since 2004 as part of the UN peacekeeping force; and the Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim has held regular meetings with his CARICOM counterparts in recent years.

The meeting also discussed the possibility of Brazil making a contribution to the Caribbean Development Fund established under



**Minister of Finance and the Economy
Hon. Harold Lovell meets HE Brian Michael
Fraser Neele**

the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas, as well as Brazil's position on the possibility of Antigua and Barbuda joining the Inter-American Development Bank.

Both Permanent Secretaries in the Ministry of Finance & Economy, Ms. Doleen Lee and Ambassador Colin Murdoch, also participated in the meeting.

Minister Lovell promised to follow-up on the items raised.

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was used as a possible indicator of where this government had faltered. But is this a fair inference? In its report on Antigua and Barbuda, the OECD has always praised the government for the strength of its legislative and regulatory framework. It commended the government for its responsiveness in updating its legislative framework on a constant basis.

The fallout from the Sir Allen Stanford issue has been and continues to be an area of grave

concern. Nothing like this occurred during the previous terms in office of any government, so it is difficult to compare and draw fair inferences.

We should always, as with the case of young adults in their development, avoid making some comparisons and drawing inferences which cannot be substantiated or grounded in analysis. Now is a time for all of us to be drawn together as citizens and residents of Antigua and Barbuda, along with our many friends and developmental partners, to build this "child" (our

homeland, or beloved country) into a productive member of the global family of nations. We hope that our development will provide a decent quality of life for all who dwell within our shores; a life of peace, harmony and one based on our traditional culture and family values.

I wish the government a successful term in office and may God bless the people of Antigua and Barbuda and all of us who call that fair land our home.

H.E. Dr Carl Roberts (13th March 2010)

Rev. Isacc hopes to strengthen regional Street Pastor movement

CEO of Ascension Trust and International Director of the Street Pastors Initiative, Rev. Les Isaac, says his mission to the Caribbean is to strengthen the movement of street pastors across the region as well as forging a partnership with the police, government and church leaders.

Speaking to the AntiguaSun Rev. Isaac said that partnerships with these bodies are very essential and will assist in bringing solutions which will have a direct bearing on the current trend that people face in terms of the rise in anti-social behaviour with young persons, gang activities and the like.

We have to look at how we together respond effectively to help to stop this trend; through these entities we form what we call urban treaty, working to heal the ills at the heart of society."

Rev. Isaac further stated that efforts are been made to expand the street pastors initiative in other countries with the view of targeting young persons to be more proactive in society, as well as encouraging church leaders to get more involved in the programme.

"I believe passionately that the church should not be just preaching, but demonstrating its love and compassion for people and one of the main issues in our society today is the lack of love that persons are getting, a very important commodity."

He further added that as church leaders there is a need for more vigilance along with prayer in the churches and more moral support given to persons in society.

"Sometimes people need someone to engage them. We need the church to go out there, visit a family, pray for them, as they are God's children. We need to come back to our roots loving our neighbours"

He also stressed the need for more street pastors to be involved in the programme.

Street Pastors is an inter-denominational church response to urban problems, engaging with people on the streets to care and dialogue. It was pioneered in London in January



CEO of Ascension Trust and International Director of the Street Pastors Initiative, Rev. Les Isaac,

2003 by Rev. Isaac, Director of Ascension Trust.

The initiative started in Antigua and Barbuda in 2006. Rev. Isaac left Antigua for Guyana and then to Trinidad & Tobago. He returns later in March to continue his work in Antigua.

Source: AntiguaSun

Street pastors conference slated for June in Antigua

Antigua and Barbuda's Street Pastors is gearing up to host a regional conference to be held at the Jolly Beach Resort from the 15-17 June 2010.

Founder of the Initiative, Rev. Les Isaac, said that the event, which will be well attended by regional stakeholders, is aimed at bringing everyone who has a concern for the community together, as well as for all interested in bringing peace to the streets and tackling anti-social behaviour.

"There are a number of challenges we face as a society today; however, I believe they are solvable when people come together to talk and think through the issue." He continued that the speakers will be drawn from across the region, including Antigua and Barbuda.

Presenters to be featured at the conference include Pastor Bobby Wilmot of Jamaica, Superintendent Andy Pratt of England, Professor John Pitts Professor of Socio-Legal studies, University of Bedfordshire, Kim Martin from Crossroads Antigua and Sheila Roseau from the Department of Gender Affairs.

The conference will also include workshop sessions and keynote speeches.

Source: AntiguaSun

Ambassador Lovell secures Technical Assistance from the OAS for Antigua and Barbuda's Public Sector Transformation Programme

Organisation of American States OAS Specialist from the Department of State Modernization and Governance Moises Benamor on Wednesday arrived in Antigua and commenced discussions with officials on the government's Public Sector Transformation Programme.

Mr. Benamor's visit was made possible through a request made by H.E. Deborah-Mae Lovell, Antigua and Barbuda's Permanent Representative to the OAS and Ambassador to the United States of America, during a recent meeting with Secretary General of the OAS, Jose Miguel Insulza.

While in Antigua, Mr. Moises Benamor, will hold preliminary discussions with Ambassador Joan Underwood, Chief Implementation Officer and the Director of the Public Sector Transformation Advisory Committee as well as other relevant

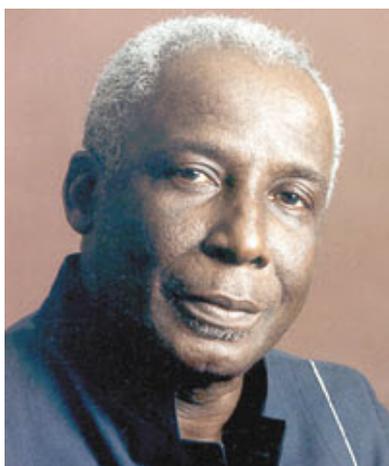
authorities in Antigua and Barbuda. Through the preparatory meetings, held between 18-19 February, Mr. Benamor, will identify the nature of the inputs required pursuant to the government's public sector reform agenda and flowing from this, he will be placed in a position to prepare a roadmap for the technical experts who will come to Antigua and Barbuda following the initial meetings.

This latest contribution from the OAS forms part of a wider package of assistance that Antigua and Barbuda receives from the hemispheric organization. In addition to its long history of providing scholarships and professional training for Antiguan and Barbudans, the OAS, during the course of the past eighteen months has provided assistance for the following projects: The Integrated Management Plan for Codrington Lagoon; The Regional Network of Women in Politics; Tourism Training and Certification and The Customs Automated Services, to name just a few.



Ambassador Lovell with Secretary General of the OAS. Jose Miguel Insulza

In outlining the assistance given to Antigua and Barbuda by the OAS, Ambassador Lovell has said that her delegation will continue to work to ensure that the level of development assistance to our country by the hemispheric organization will not only be maintained but also expanded.



PM Spencer attends Official Funeral of Professor Rex Nettleford

Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda Dr. the Hon. W. Baldwin Spencer arrived in Jamaica on 15th February 2010 to attend the Official Funeral of Professor Emeritus of the

University of the West Indies Rex Nettleford who passed away recently.

Prime Minister Spencer was accompanied to the Official Funeral by Former Resident Tutor of the UWI Extra Mural Department in Antigua and Barbuda Dr. Ermina Oshoba and Chairman of the Sir V.C. Bird Centenary Committee and Historian, Alister Thomas.

On the passing of Professor Nettleford, Prime Minister Spencer said that his greatness lay, not in self-promotion, but in his promotion of the Caribbean, particularly the English-speaking islands in which Africa collided with Great Britain, as a place of great political potential and greater human self-actualization. He noted that Professor Nettleford accomplished this not only in theory, as a writer of

significant intellectual insight and literary ability, but in practice, through art and music and dance, language and, most importantly, through education.

Professor Nettleford is known for his intellectual and artistic contributions to the issues of black identity in the Western world as well as for his understanding of the role of culture and development. This earned him respect throughout the Americas, Europe and Africa.

He has received many honours and awards for his work including the Jamaican National Honour of Order of Merit, the Living Legend Award from the Black Arts Festival, Atlanta USA and the UWI Pelican Award.

Ministry of Legal Affairs Statement on Antigua and Barbuda's Status with the FATF

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which is the international body that sets the anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) global standards, has as at February 18 2010 issued a public statement identifying countries who currently have regulatory deficiencies and placing them in four (4) categories. Antigua and Barbuda has been placed in category 4 which are "jurisdictions which have deficiencies for which they have developed an action plan and expressed a high-level political commitment to work with FATF and the regional Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF) to address these identified deficiencies".

The public statement follows a face-to-face meeting in November 2009 in Argentina between the International Cooperation Review Group (ICRG) and Antigua and Barbuda represented by the Hon. Attorney General, Justin L. Simon QC and the Chair of the Financial Services Regulatory

Commission (FSRC), Ms. Althea Crick. A follow-up Report was submitted by Antigua and Barbuda in early February 2010 following the recent passage in the House of Representatives of important amendments to various pieces of legislation including The Money Laundering (Prevention) (Amendment) Bill, The Prevention of Terrorism (Amendment) Bill, and the International Business Corporations (Amendment) Bill. These Bills will be debated in the Senate next week.

The arrest of R. Allen Stanford in the U.S. on allegations that he operated a massive Ponzi Scheme through his wholly-owned Stanford International Bank which is registered in and regulated by Antigua and Barbuda, and the request for the extradition of Leroy King the former Administrator of FSRC has highlighted deficiencies in our legal and regulatory framework additional to those previously identified in the CFATF's 2007 Mutual Evaluation Examiners Report on Antigua and Barbuda. The Report is conducted in each jurisdiction every third year and assesses compliance with FATF Recommendations and implementation of changing norms and regulatory practices. Stanford International Bank Limited is currently in liquidation.

Antigua and Barbuda has committed itself to and has been duly implementing the requested amendments and changes to its off-shore financial regime and will be making a full report on its legislative and regulatory actions at the CFATF Plenary in June 2010. We are pleased with the progress made to date following the 30th Plenary in Curaçao in October 2009 at which a follow-up Report had been tabled for CFATF's consideration and review. This is an ongoing process.

While we recognise the vital importance of the off-shore financial sector to our economy, we must also pay close attention to our concomitant obligation to maintain the global standards of good governance and AML/CFT requirements. We are therefore working assiduously at correcting these deficiencies by June 2010. We expect our financial institutions (whether local or off-shore) to recognise the changes being made, both regulatory and legislative, and call on them to ensure their diligent and effective compliance as we continuously seek to improve our international standing.

Over \$12 million estimated for total Church restoration

Late last year, the Cathedral of St. John the Divine (St. John's Cathedral) celebrated its 161st year of existence; in the same year, it was also forced to close its doors after a section of its floor collapsed and became the scene of an accident when a teacher fell through the floor.

The church's Dean, Rudolph Smithen estimated a grand total of \$3 million dollars for renovating the church's roof, floor and pews. This estimate, however, has been further increased to \$12 million. The church's restoration committee plans to tackle these issues in separate phases and will be seeking to raise funds accordingly.

During the first phase, repairs will be done to the structure's foundation and roof and the pews will be replaced; this is expected to cost \$3,440,000. Another \$3,840,000 or so will be needed for the second phase of the project which is to include repairs to external and internal walls as well as electrical work.

The last two phases will consist of several other projects; to include the relocation of the vestry, renovation of bathroom facilities and the stairs leading to the tower doors, repairs to the perimeter walls and gates, clocks and clarion and the church's pathway.

The church's restoration committee has embarked on several fund-raising missions and will continue to do so in order to facilitate the repairs to the historic landmark.



St John's Cathedral

Antigua and Barbuda double airlift from Italian market

Livingston airlines will significantly increase its direct charter flight services to Antigua and Barbuda from Milan, Italy this year.

The agreement to extend the weekly charter was the outcome of successful discussions between the CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority Colin C. James, and CEO of Livingston Airlines Giancarlo Celani, at BIT, Borsa Internazionale del Turismo (International Tourism Exchange), the largest Italian Tourism trade and travel fair in Milan.

"This news will be welcomed by the Italian tour operators and local hotels who over the last few years have been clamouring to get the service extended" James said.

He indicated that the new extended charter schedule will commence on Sundays and now allows the destination to actively target the Italian wedding and honeymoon market.

Livingston's CEO, who has never been to the destination, graciously accepted an invitation from James to not only visit Antigua and Barbuda but, also committed to providing free seats for a mega FAM and press trip to help promote the destination.

Last year, the Ministry of Tourism's statistics showed a growth of 9.68% from the Italian Market, in spite of the global declines in other markets.



Antigua and Barbuda at the Italian Tourism Trade and Travel Fair in Milan

Antigua and Barbuda's Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation and Culture, John Maginley, said: "In this time when airlines are cutting back it is great to know that our partnership with our operators continues to be strong and this latest development shows that the government's investment in the tourism industry is now yielding positive results for the country in growing markets like Italy."

The once-a-week charter which commenced this season's service in November 2009 would usually run until April. Service has now been extended to run until the first week in September. Livingston also committed to resume its winter schedule even earlier than previously at the end of October this year.

BIT which runs from the 18 to 21 February, allows tourism related entities to meet members of the trade and the public.

This year, Jolly Beach Resort and Spa, Elle Colonna, Elite Island Resorts, The Inn at English Harbour and Hermitage Bay jointly participated with the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority in promoting the destination at the event.

This positive development comes hard on the heels of the Donnavventura TV show which was recently filmed in Antigua and Barbuda and aired on Italian TV last weekend.

The Antigua and Barbuda office in Italy has seen a rush of inquiries since the show's airing.

Another Italian TV crew is currently on island filming for additional programmes which will showcase the country's investment and tourism potential.

Source: antiguasunonline.com

Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta - April 15 to 20

New Director for the Wesley Study Centre

The **Wesley Study Centre, Durham** has recently nominated a new Director. **The Rev. Dr. Calvin T. Samuel** will take over the leading role in September 2010, subject to the confirmation of the Methodist Conference. He will succeed the Rev. Dr. Roger Walton who will step down after successfully leading the Wesley Study Centre for 11 years.

Dr Samuel who is currently New Testament Tutor at Spurgeon's College, London, and Chaplain to Farringtons School in the Orpington and Chislehurst Circuit, will take up the position as the Wesley Study Centre enters its 22nd Anniversary year. He brings with him a wealth of experience, including previous roles as Assistant Director of Research and Faculty Administration at London Business School, and Visiting Lecturer in Biblical studies at Nazarene Theological College as well as ministry in Circuit.

Professor James Dunn, Chair of the Wesley Study Centre Management Committee said: "Dr Samuel is a Methodist minister who comes to us with a very impressive educational background, including an MBA (Manchester Business School)

and PhD (King's College, London), and a very interesting range of experience, including bank management, university administration, circuit ministry, school chaplaincy, and lecturing in biblical studies. He is highly regarded in London as an outstanding minister and an excellent communicator. He has served as Convenor of the Vocational Development Commission from its inception in the London District in 2006, and as a member of Methodism's Faith and Order Committee. The Wesley Study Centre has shown a pioneering spirit from its beginning 21 years ago, and the WSC Management Committee is very much looking forward to Dr Samuel taking over its leadership into the next phase, starting next year."

David Wilkinson, Principal of St John's College at Durham University said: "The appointment of Dr Calvin Samuel is an exciting opportunity for both the Wesley Study Centre and St John's College. Dr Samuel will push our commitment to cutting edge thinking in mission and ministry. His academic work on holiness will find resonances with formation in ministry being located in rigorous theological

thinking, prayer, worship and transformed lifestyle.

"The growth of the Wesley Study Centre over the past 20 years has been astonishing. This appointment will solidify its national and international reputation and take it forward in new ways."

Dr Calvin Samuel was born in Barbados and grew up in Antigua before coming to Britain to study for a BA in Theology and Pastoral Studies at Nazarene Theological College in Manchester. He is married to Ramona and they are parents to Tiana and Fletcher.

Following his appointment, Dr Samuel said: "The Wesley Study Centre's close links with Durham University, its location near Northumberland and historic Methodist sites, its ecumenical approach to ministerial formation and theological enquiry, all of which are enlivened by an open spirituality, make it one of the best resourced theological institutions in British Methodism. I am excited at the prospect of becoming Director of the Wesley Study Centre and looking forward to further developing the excellent work being done there."

Annual Tennis Week

May 1 to 8

Antigua and Barbuda passport application Procedures

An Overview

For persons born in Antigua and Barbuda

Documents Required:

1. Antigua and Barbuda birth certificate (original) and/or
2. Antigua and Barbuda baptismal certificate (original) (only required if father's name does not appear in the surname box of the birth certificate. The parents' names normally appear on a baptismal certificate)
3. If married or divorced (decree absolute), marriage certificate or decree absolute (original with 'Apostille')
4. Two passport photographs (white background) one has to be certified by a professional person and his official stamp affixed to Section 9 of the form. He also has to complete Section 9
5. Previous Antigua and Barbuda passport, (or e.g. British passport Colony of Antigua, State of Antigua)

All documents must be originals/certified copies. Please note that all non-Antigua and Barbuda documents must have a 'Stamp of Apostille' affixed (legalization) by the relevant Authority. For example, UK documents are legalized by the (British) Foreign and Commonwealth Office. (www.fco.gov.uk)

For persons born in the UK of Antiguan and Barbudan parents

Documents Required:

1. Full United Kingdom birth certificate (original) which has the name(s) of Antigua and Barbudan parent(s) through whom citizenship is being claimed
2. Antigua and Barbuda birth certificate of parent(s) (original)
3. Antigua and Barbuda baptismal certificate of parents (original) (only required if father's name does not appear in the surname box of the birth certificate and father's name is used). Both parents' names normally appear on a baptismal certificate
4. If married or divorced (decree absolute), marriage certificate or decree absolute (original with 'Apostille')
5. Two passport photographs (white background) one has to be certified by a professional person, complete Section 9 and then affix official stamp
6. Note all first time applicants have to be interviewed and must also produce parents Antigua and Barbuda passport (if available) and UK (or other) passport

For persons applying on the basis of naturalisation (citizenship by residence):

1. Antigua and Barbuda original naturalisation certificate,
2. certified/original copy of birth certificate (with 'Apostille')

Additional Information

- a. Blank passport application forms (L adult, M child under 16 years) and guidance notes can be downloaded from our website: www.antigua-barbuda.com or www.antiguabarbuda.gov.ag or telephone the High Commission 020 7258 0070 to obtain a form.
- b. The notes provide details of the required documents to support claim to citizenship..
- c. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) 'Apostille'/legalizes British documents. Details on the procedures is available on the FCO's website: www.fco.gov.uk or telephone the FCO on 01908 295111. The current fee for the 'Apostille' is £28.
- d. For renewal of an Antigua and Barbuda passport, the relevant documents e.g. birth, baptismal, marriage certificates have to be submitted. In some cases a Deed Poll or Affidavit may be required.
- e. Fees – adult passport £50.00, child passport £25.00. All applicants pay an extra £80.00 for the courier service to forward to Antigua and return documents and passport to the High Commission.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT THE HIGH COMMISSION (telephone 020 7258 0070) TO CLARIFY THE PROCEDURES FOR APPLYING FOR AN ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA PASSPORT AS EACH CASE MAY VARY. THE ABOVE NOTES IS FOR GUIDANCE

The above procedures came into effect in 2006 with the introduction of new machine readable 'Caribbean Community Antigua and Barbuda passports' which are only issued in Antigua.

For persons applying on the grounds of marriage

The above process is solely handled by the Passport Office Antigua (www.foreignaffairs.gov.ag)

**STATE INSURANCE CORPORATION
DIVESTMENT PROJECT FACT SHEET**

February, 23

In an effort to bring clarity to the discussion about the State Insurance Corporation (SIC) Divestment Project, the Divestment Unit – which was established in the Office of the Prime Minister in October 2009 to identify the potential for privatization of several state-owned corporations - has issued the present Fact Sheet which aims at answering the following questions:

1. What are the overall objectives of the Government's divestment programme?
2. What is the rationale of the SIC Divestment Project?
3. Is it true that the State Insurance Corporation Act restricts SIC's ability to expand beyond Antigua and Barbuda?
4. What are the objectives of the Divestment Project?
5. Why should the Government divest a company from which it receives dividends?
6. Would other divestment options be considered? What about a listing of SIC on regional financial markets?
7. Why wasn't the first option for divestment that of selling the company to the general public?
8. Would SIC's Board of Directors, Management and Staff and other stakeholders be involved?
9. What is the impact of the Project on State Insurance Corporation? On its customers?
10. What process will be followed?
11. And what if the Project does not succeed?
12. What are the criteria for qualification?
13. Would the Government commit to communicate on the Project to the media and to the general public?

1 - What are the overall objectives of the Government's Divestment Programme?

In the wake of receiving a new mandate during the March 2009 general elections the United Progressive Party administration articulated the following objectives for its divestment programme:

i. Relieve the Financial and Administrative Burden of Government

Divestment is a means of generating revenue for the Treasury - revenue that can assist the government in fulfilling other obligations including poverty reduction.

ii. Reduce the Size of the Public Sector

There is consensus across the political spectrum and indeed the wider society that the public sector is too large and 'not fit for purpose'. Divestment would serve to 'right-size' the public sector.

iii. Improve Efficiency and Productivity

The Antiguan and Barbudan public yearns for better services and a higher level of productivity from state-owned corporations. Divestment will play a pivotal role in the realization of such a desire. The improvement in efficiency can be aided by the injection

of new capital by the investors who take up the 'divested shares'. The associated capital injection could also fund the introduction of new products, services and business models that will redound to the benefit of consumers.

iv. Broaden the Ownership Base

The Baldwin Spencer administration has repeatedly enunciated its policy of empowering Antiguan and Barbudans. The divestment strategy is a fitting way to operationalize that policy. In particular, employees at the state-owned corporations will have the opportunity to buy shares. As joint owners, employees will have a vested interest in ensuring that these corporations perform with maximum efficiency.

v. Depoliticisation of Decisions in the Target Industries

Throughout the years, successive governments have been accused of politicizing the management of state owned enterprises. Through divestment, new ownership and management structures along with the corporate governance principles will help to restore and/or augment confidence in these corporations.

vi. Market Liberalization

As the forces of globalization continue to impact domestic, regional and international transactions, small states in particular are being forced to adapt to new economic realities. In this regard, state owned corporations must change their ways of operations if they are to be competitive in these liberalized markets. If state owned corporations cannot be brought in line with 21st century modalities, then the economic footing of this country may be weakened.

2-What is the rationale for the SIC Divestment Project?

Two types of considerations are the basis of the SIC Divestment Project: on the Corporation itself, and, most importantly, on the insurance sector in Antigua and Barbuda.

A-On State Insurance Corporation

An initial review of State Insurance Corporation was conducted in October 2009. It highlighted the following:

- Since its appointment in 2004, the current Board of Directors has effected a significant turnaround of SIC's operations. SIC has been operationally profitable over the last several years.
- However, **it was determined that the Company is currently operating at close to a peak performance** as:
 - The company's market share has not grown in the last five years. Its market share has remained stable at 18-19%, according to data from the Financial Services Regulatory Commission (FSRC). It was assessed that the company is not aggressively pursuing new opportunities in terms of developing new distribution channels, addressing new customer needs and reaching beyond Antigua and Barbuda.
 - There are significant areas of operational improvements for instance human resources, information systems, customer service and marketing.
 - SIC's status as a statutory body seems to restrict its ability to develop its activities notably outside Antigua and Barbuda (please see question 2 below).

B-On the Insurance Sector in Antigua and Barbuda

There are approximately 88,000 inhabitants in Antigua and Barbuda, but we have 21 active insurance companies. None of them have more than 20% market share. Most of them have limited capital and operational means. The main reason this situation prevails is that Antigua and Barbuda has been lucky not to have been hit by a hurricane in the last eleven years; therefore our insurance companies have not been exposed to the significant claims which such a dramatic event would trigger. Should a major hurricane happen, it is possible that many companies would collapse and the correlated default of payment of claims could significantly damage our national economy. **Consolidation must happen in order for Antigua to benefit from larger, better capitalized insurance operators with greater expertise who would sustain the risks created by our hurricane-prone location.**

The situation is similar in the Eastern Caribbean where over 60 insurance companies are operating. This explains recent proposals made at the regulatory level to unify the Eastern Caribbean Market including the introduction of uniform insurance legislation throughout the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the formation of an Insurance Association of the Eastern Caribbean States, and the establishment of an independent Single Regulatory Unit (SRU) in each OECS country¹.

C-Conclusion

Our initial review concluded that State Insurance Corporation would benefit from the injection of capital and the expertise of a reputable insurance investor in order to improve its operations and service offerings. Divestment will also enable SIC to participate in the necessary consolidation of the insurance market expected to unfold in Antigua and Barbuda and in the wider Eastern Caribbean.

¹ These proposals have been backed by the Eastern Caribbean Central Bank (ECCB), the Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC), and the Caribbean Association of Insurance Regulators.

3 - Is it true that the State Insurance Corporation Act restricts SIC's ability to expand beyond Antigua and Barbuda?

A team of legal experts is reviewing this issue. At this early stage, it can be said that the State Insurance Corporation Act per se may not restrict the ability of SIC to develop its business including abroad. However, its charter as a statutory body may limit its ability to grow in certain areas for instance to forge equity partnerships with other operators.

Please note that the rationale for the Divestment Project is not based on a mere legal issue, but on more important considerations related to SIC's sustainable development and on the viability of our insurance sector as explained above.

4 - What are the objectives of the Divestment Project?

Faced with the situation explained above, this Government took the decision to actively pursue a strategy which will enable State Insurance Corporation to grow further as well as address the weaknesses of our insurance sector. Therefore, the objectives of the State Insurance Corporation Divestment Project are:

1. To ensure the **long term sustainable development of State Insurance Corporation** through a partnership between the Government and a reputable private sector insurance investor;
2. To support the necessary **consolidation of the insurance sector** in Antigua which should lead to significant improvements in the sustainability, efficiency and quality of insurance services in Antigua and Barbuda; this will in turn support the growth of the national economy.
3. To provide **fiscal revenues to the Government**; this will be allocated to priority sectors thereby stimulating economic activity.
4. To give staff, policy holders and other interested Antiguan and Barbudan investors the **opportunity to purchase shares in SIC**. This will be accomplished when the Government divests some of its remaining interests.

5 - Why should the Government divest a company from which it receives dividends?

It is true that SIC has provided combined dividends of \$18 million to the Government in the last two years. It has also benefited from a tax exempt status. With the Divestment Project, speaking on strict financial terms, the Government seeks to maximize the return on its investment in SIC. As will be explained in question 6, **the value the Government could earn from this Project is expected to be much higher** than the flow of dividends the Government would earn on a *business as usual* scenario.

In addition, strategic and timing considerations are involved. Should the expected consolidation of the national insurance sector happen without State Insurance Corporation, SIC could lose its current strong market position and its financial value to the Government would likely be significantly reduced.

6 - Would other divestment options be considered? What about a listing of SIC on regional financial markets?

At this stage, all options are considered. We have just mobilized IFC, the private sector arm of the World Bank to advise on the Project. IFC has an impressive international track record and extensive experience in privatization transactions in the insurance sector. They have just initiated their work and started mobilizing technical and legal consultants. In two to three months maximum, IFC will submit to the Divestment Unit a report ("Strategic Options Report") describing their recommendations notably in terms of which divestment option would best meet the objectives assigned to the project.

Please note, however, that an initial review performed by the Divestment Unit found that SIC would benefit from the technical expertise – which would lead to immediate improvements of the Corporation's operations - as well as the economies of scale and capital a partnership with a reputable insurance investor would provide. This same initial review also mentioned the likelihood that such an option would lead to a higher valuation of the Corporation as it would be assessed both on its own merits and on these likely benefits.

7 - Why wasn't the first option for divestment that of selling the company to the general public?

As mentioned above, the initial review highlighted the importance of technical expertise, economies of scale and significant cash injection. In the absence of these factors the sale of SIC shares to the general public is not likely to guarantee the long term sustainability of the company.

8 - Would SIC's board of directors, management, staff and other stakeholders be involved?

Regular updates will be provided to SIC's board of directors, management and staff in order for them to be aware of the progress made, and to give them the opportunity to raise their concerns and comments. **To make the divestment possible and give the people of Antigua the option to contribute to SIC's future success and standing, the company needs the continuous endorsement of its customers as well as the unwavering support and continued hard work of its directors, management and staff.**

The Divestment Strategy Policy Paper which was approved by Cabinet in October 2009 mandated the establishment of an **Advisory Committee**. This Advisory Committee will be closely associated with the Project, will review its progress and advise the Government – through the Divestment Unit – throughout the process. The list of participants of this Advisory Committee is being finalized but would likely include representatives of the unions, of SIC's staff and management, of the Ministry of Finance as well as other stakeholders.

9 - What is the impact of the Project on State Insurance Corporation? On its customers?

At this stage, **the Project has no impact on the Corporation's strategy, operations, management and staff**. Under the leadership of Chairman Pedro Corbin, SIC continues to deliver its high quality services which are the basis for the company's strong reputation in Antigua. After the successful implementation of the Project, we expect SIC to increase the efficiency of its operations, diversify its product portfolio and ultimately deliver a greater service value to its customers.

10 - What process will be followed?

Over the next two to three months, IFC will mobilize technical and legal consultants and analyze the regulatory, legal, business and financial aspects of the divestment process. Following such analysis, the Government will launch an international bidding process and invite reputable insurance investors to express interest. Investors with **adequate financial strength and technical expertise** will then be invited to submit their proposals. The qualified investor which will submit **the strongest plan for the development of SIC** and propose **the highest value** for the Government and people of Antigua and Barbuda will be awarded the Project. The entire process is expected to last six to eight months.

11 - And what if the Project does not succeed?

If no investors of adequate technical expertise and financial strength submit a proposal; or if the proposals submitted are below the minimum requirement of the Government in terms of value; or if the proposals submitted do not ensure the sustainable development of SIC, then the Government would not divest State Insurance Corporation. At this stage however, given the performance of the company and the perceived opportunities in the market, we strongly believe that the Project will be successfully implemented.

12 - What are the criteria for qualification?

Potential investors would be qualified on the basis of their technical expertise and financial strength. The exact criteria, and broadly speaking the details of the bidding process, are being defined and will be communicated in the next two to three months through the media and on the Internet.

13 - Would the Government commit to communicate on the Project to the media and to the public opinion?

Yes: we will provide regular updates on the progress of the Project as well as make ourselves available to address comments and concerns of stakeholders. It is most likely, however, that the next important announcement would not occur before the next two to three months – i.e. Once the Government has reviewed the Strategic Options Report, has made a determination and is ready to announce the final details of the bidding process/way forward.